

PENDING ACTIONS: Utah continues to have a USF, but only on an interim basis. The objective is to replace it by September 1996 (Docket 93-999-05). The interim USF was an extension of what was in place since 1989. Defining basic service will be part of the revision. They want to do a much better job targeting of high cost areas and plan on breaking study areas into census groups so only those areas needing subsidy get it. They don't see changing who contributes but may lower the 1/2 cent charge since they have excess money in the USF. Distribution of money from the fund will be based on a Commission established "target rate" for local exchange service. They recently certified three new providers and just finished a US West rate case involving rate rebalancing case. US West wanted to raise residential rates by \$5 per line. As a result of the rate case, US West was required to keep residential rates flat and lower business rates. LEC rates will go up in the short run, but new entrants will drive down rates. If rates are too low, then no competitors will enter the market. Wireless loop technology will become a factor in high cost areas in the future given Utah's geography.

COMMENTS: Utah's penetration rate is ahead of the national average. The Commission has been proactive and has tried to keep people on the phone system. UPSC policy prohibits disconnecting service because subscriber hasn't paid their long distance bill. They have also been proactive in extending service to non-covered areas using infrastructure reimbursements, and they have the Lifeline program for low income residents.

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Programs to access video/cable services: No cable providers have applied for certification, but they are watching process.

Programs to access advanced information services: Utah has proposed a Technology 2000 initiative to invest \$120M in a state information highway. Technology 2000 will revolutionize education by training teachers and professors and developing technology-delivered courses on the largest wide area network of its kind in the world. To promote telecommuting, 33 state employees will be provided with voice and data connections and equipment sufficient to perform their work from home from one to five days per week. Utah is also experimenting with satellite radio communication in remote areas to determine the feasibility of this new technology.

Programs for electronic access to public/government records: Utah has an Information Technology Commission that is setting up a state network. The state also has a Web Server/Bulletin Board to provide nationwide access to state government, and the establishment of news, list, gopher, and proxy server interfaces to the Internet is being pursued.

Public/private partnerships: The Technology 2000 initiative has significant private sector involvement and impact. Utah recently became the first state to establish digital signature rules to aid and encourage Electronic Commerce.

1995 NTIA/TIIAP GRANTS

Southern Utah University Department of Continuing Education is involved in a planning project to look at how information infrastructure can improve economic development, as well as K-12 education in the area. The plan calls for an emerging "Electronic Village" to provide introductions to the Internet, and will demonstrate examples of such villages through the WWW (Total \$21K, Federal \$11K).

Utah Department of Health Office of Strategic Planning and Evaluation will expand access to the Utah Public Health Information Network to the satellite public health offices that serve the 15 rural and frontier counties that make up the southern half of Utah (Total \$514K, Federal \$222K).

VERMONT

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STATE DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: 576,000
Size: 9,615
Proportion rural: 67.8%
Population per sq. mile: 62.2
Median household income: \$32,829
Percent below poverty: 10.4%
Percent on public assistance: 7.2%

TELEPHONE SERVICE DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of lines: 327,517
Number of LECs: 9
BOC: NYNEX
Market share of BOC: 83.4%
Penetration Rate: 94.7%
LEC competition permitted: no regulatory barrier

OPASTCO STUDY

Subscribers per sq. mile: 23.1
Difference in non-BOC loop costs: 2.1%
Monthly revenues per customer: \$15.15
Revenues if supports eliminated: \$28.68
Percent who would disconnect: 27.10%

TELEPHONE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

Copper : Yes **Hybrid Fiber:** No
Fiber : Yes **Microwave:** No
Percent local loop digital: 14.27%
Other Technology:

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Cable households: 58.0%
Cable in schools: 34.0%

TELEPHONE SERVICE RATES

BOC residential rate (\$): \$12.75
LEC residential rates: \$6.00 to \$16.00

UNIVERSAL TELEPHONE SERVICE PROGRAMS

Status of State Universal Service Program: Mandated Universal Service (US) with approved rules, fund in place
Targeted Groups: Rural/high cost, Low income/economically disadvantaged, Emergency services (911)
Definition of basic service: Touch tone, voice grade line, enhanced 911 services, directory assistance, modem capable, telecommunication relay service

STATE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND: Yes

Fund Administrator: LEC Assoc. (NECA)
Contributors: LECs, BOC, wireless, resellers
Basis for contribution: 2% surcharge on all bills including interstate, cellular, directory assistance, 2-way cable, and, PCN service
Types of subsidies: Rate subsidy, Direct infrastructure reimbursement
Who draws from fund: Telecommunication Relay Service: Subsidy given to provider of TRS service/contractor; Lifeline: Rate subsidy to the carrier for eligible customers; 911: Direct infrastructure reimbursement to carrier
Is subsidy portable: Lifeline: Yes, Others: No

FEDERAL UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUNDS: Lifeline: Yes Link Up: Yes High Cost: Yes

PENDING ACTIONS: The VPSB is currently trying to decide how to distribute high cost funds. The legislation mandates US for high cost areas, and they are currently developing the formula for distributing high costs funds. They may try to expand the definition of basic service to include white page listing. They have a rate case with NYNEX who wants a 5% increase in residential rates. NYNEX also wants to go under a price cap. Rates are going up for local LECs, but LECs are required to expand services with rate increases. With deaveraging the statewide average rate will stay the same, but rural rates will go up. NYNEX was ordered to put in digital switches and the PSB disallowed the use of copper in the loop.

COMMENTS: NECA administers the Vermont USF.

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Programs to access video/cable services: The Vermont Common Core initiative seek to utilize new digital and video technologies for use in assessment, instruction, remediation and enrichment activities.

Programs to access advanced information services: The state is expanding Internet to schools and people in rural areas can call schools to access the Internet.

Programs for electronic access to public/government records:

Public/private partnerships:

1995 NTIA/TIIAP GRANTS

Castleton State College. Through this grant representatives of the private sector, local government, and education will develop a telecommunication infrastructure plan for west-central Vermont (Total \$116K, Federal \$54K).

VIRGINIA

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STATE DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: 6,491,000
Size: 42,326
Proportion rural: 70.6%
Population per sq. mile: 163.9
Median household income: \$38,223
Percent below poverty: 9.4%
Percent on public assistance: 4.8%

OPASTCO STUDY

Subscribers per sq. mile: 15.0
Difference in non-BOC loop costs: 28.7%
Monthly revenues per customer: \$13.05
Revenues if supports eliminated: \$25.94
Percent who would disconnect: 27.10%

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Cable households: 62.0%
Cable in schools: 65.0%

TELEPHONE SERVICE DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of lines: 3,479,506
Number of LECs: 21
BOC: Bell Atlantic
Market share of BOC: 76.1%
Penetration Rate: 94.6%
LEC competition permitted: 1995

TELEPHONE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

Copper : Yes **Hybrid Fiber:** No
Fiber : Yes **Microwave:** No
Percent local loop digital: 99.74%
Other Technology:

TELEPHONE SERVICE RATES

BOC residential rate (s): \$8.51 - \$14.82
LEC residential rates: \$6.00 to \$16.35

UNIVERSAL TELEPHONE SERVICE PROGRAMS

Status of State Universal Service Program: No statutes, regulations, or commission orders mandating Universal Service (US)
Targeted Groups: None
Definition of basic service: None

STATE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND: No

Fund Administrator:
Contributors:
Basis for contribution:
Types of subsidies:
Who draws from fund:
Is subsidy portable:

FEDERAL UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUNDS: Lifeline: Yes Link Up: Yes High Cost: Yes

PENDING ACTIONS: VCC doesn't have a docket on US now, but they will after they issue rules on local competition. The draft rules require that they define basic service in the planned US docket. Target groups and funding mechanisms may also be part of that docket. Draft rules also say VCC can consider a USF, and requires participation of all telecommunication providers in any US program. GTE has filed a rate case requesting a substantial rate increase. They can't have new entrants until after the new rules are approved. Three companies under currently price cap for 3-5 years, so rates should be flat.

COMMENTS: The VCC is approaching US thoroughly and cautiously. VA has a high penetration rate, affordable rates, and the companies are making money. They're not sure a subsidy is needed and don't want to intervene if there is no problem.

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Programs to access video/cable services: One cable company has been certified and will become a LEC on 1/1/96.

Programs to access advanced information services: The Virginia Information Technology Infrastructure Task Force is tasked to promote the establishment of a modern, state-of-the-art telecommunications and information technology network, fully utilized by state agencies and institutions, as well as local governments and the general public. Some smaller LECs are trying to support advanced information services by giving a flat rate for local call access to Internet. They are also trying to get more ISDN lines installed.

Programs for electronic access to public/government records: The Department of Information Technology has set up Virginia On-Line. The Commission plans on being on the Internet in the future.

Public/private partnerships: Some LECs have created special grants for education programs. Virginia wants to use more public/private partnerships in future to address its telecommunication needs.

1995 NTIA/TIIAP GRANTS

Blacksburg Electronic Village (BEV), Inc. This grant will bring high capacity Internet-based services into the daily activities of an underserved and disadvantaged, rural Appalachian population by replicating the model of the Blacksburg Electronic Village in Radford, VA. Government information, social services, public education, and local business information will be disseminated to homes, schools, public libraries, and places of work (Total \$548K, Federal \$267K).

Rockbridge Regional Library. This project is designed to bring citizens access to advanced communications and information services through computers located in public libraries. The libraries will be able to share information by computer links and members of the public can use the Internet and the world-wide information network (Total \$606, Federal \$225).

WASHINGTON

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STATE DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: 5,255,000
Size: 70,637
Proportion rural: 23.6%
Population per sq. mile: 78.9
Median household income: \$34,064
Percent below poverty: 11.0%
Percent on public assistance: 6.9%

TELEPHONE SERVICE DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of lines: 2,946,010
Number of LECs: 26
BOC: US West
Market share of BOC: 65.6%
Penetration Rate: 95.7%
LEC competition permitted: 1994

OPASTCO STUDY

Subscribers per sq. mile: 11.6
Difference in non-BOC loop costs: 48.6%
Monthly revenues per customer: \$13.10
Revenues if supports eliminated: \$25.94
Percent who would disconnect: 27.10%

TELEPHONE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

Copper : Yes **Hybrid Fiber:** No
Fiber : Yes **Microwave:** No
Percent local loop digital: 97.93 %
Other Technology: ISDN, BETRS

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Cable households: 66.0%
Cable in schools: 74.0%

TELEPHONE SERVICE RATES

BOC residential rate (s): \$8.75-12.75
LEC residential rates: \$7.00 to \$26.00

UNIVERSAL TELEPHONE SERVICE PROGRAMS

Status of State Universal Service Program: Mandated Universal Service (US) with approved rules, fund in place
Targeted Groups: Rural/high cost
Definition of basic service: None (see pending)

STATE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND: Yes

Fund Administrator: LEC Association (WECA)
Contributors: LECs, BOC, IXC
Basis for contribution: Carriers proportion of total state access minutes
Types of subsidies: Rate subsidy to eligible carriers
Who draws from fund: LECs whose unsupported loop cost is greater than 115% of the state-wide average
Is subsidy portable: Not at present

FEDERAL UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUNDS: Lifeline: Yes Link Up: Yes High Cost: Yes

PENDING ACTIONS: Washington Independent Telephone Association has requested the WUTC define US and the WUTC is developing a position paper on how US should be funded on a competitively neutral basis. This will eventually lead to an order from the Commission. Some in the state have argued that the commission has no authority in this matter. As part of this position paper, they will define basic service, and modem capability is one issue. They are hoping to coordinate their efforts with current FCC initiatives. They don't regulate wireless, but they would include cellular and cable to the USF if they offer telephone service. The WUTC wants to make sure the distribution of funds, the subsidies, reflect the carrier's actual cost. US West currently has a rate case before the UTC, and GTE and United are making a series of draft filing in lieu of rate cases. US West has requested to increase residential rates to \$26. The UTC is not sure rates should go up, even though carriers think so. They expect to see much more wireless used in the future, especially in remote areas.

COMMENTS: The WUTC is trying to be specific about what is being subsidized and how the subsidies will be used.

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Programs to access video/cable services: No cable companies have applied for certification, but they would participate in the USF if they provide local service.

Programs to access advanced information services: The Commission does not regulate information service providers. There are areas in the state that lack Internet providers, making access a problem in outlying areas. The Commission hopes it won't have to intervene and that competition will expand accessibility. A state Public Information Access Policy Task Force is currently seeking public comment on its draft report. A final report is due December 1, 1996.

Programs for electronic access to public/government records: Washington was the first commission to put documents on the Internet. The Governor has a task force in place to examine this issue. What should be on line and how it should be paid for are unanswered questions.

Public/private partnerships:

1995 NTIA/TIIAP GRANTS

Alliance of Information and Referral Systems Contracts and Grants Division. This grant will establish standards for cataloging emergency resource information. It will also widen the array of information access paths available to disaster professionals, planning groups, and community residents by installing WWW sites to house and protect data structures from disruption (Total \$592K, Federal \$269K).

Community Technology Institute, located in Seattle, will create access to telecommunications for an additional 15,000 homeless and phoneless poor people by adding four cities - Miami, Phoenix, New Orleans, and Austin - to the national federation of Community Voice Mail programs (Total \$183K, Federal \$79K).

Northwest Regional Primary Care Association will develop a plan for a Regional Electronic Primary Care Network to serve the region. The project is designed to link primary care health care providers who serve medically underserved populations (Total \$49K, Federal \$24).

Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle. A team of high school sophomores will plan, design, and initiate a community information network and will, in turn, assist with training succeeding teams. Participants in the project will visit high technology firms in the Seattle area. Mentors from area high tech firms will be assigned to students for a "job shadowing" experience (Total \$371K, Federal \$181K).

WEST VIRGINIA

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STATE DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: 1,820,000
Size: 24,232
Proportion rural: 63.9%
Population per sq. mile: 75.6
Median household income: \$20,301
Percent below poverty: 22.3%
Percent on public assistance: 9.7%

TELEPHONE SERVICE DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of lines: 815,728
Number of LECs: 9
BOC: Bell Atlantic
Market share of BOC: 83.5%
Penetration Rate: 90.5%
LEC competition permitted: no regulatory barrier

OPASTCO STUDY

Subscribers per sq. mile: 8.9
Difference in non-BOC loop costs: 26.7%
Monthly revenues per customer: \$25.56
Revenues if supports eliminated: \$49.37
Percent who would disconnect: 44.70%

TELEPHONE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

Copper : Yes **Hybrid Fiber:** No
Fiber : Yes **Microwave:** No
Percent local loop digital: 100%
Other Technology:

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Cable households: 71.0%
Cable in schools: 64.0%

TELEPHONE SERVICE RATES

BOC residential rate (s): \$15.80
LEC residential rates: \$22.00 to \$36.00

UNIVERSAL TELEPHONE SERVICE PROGRAMS

Status of State Universal Service Program: No statutes, regulations, or commission orders mandating Universal Service (US)

Targeted Groups: Low income/economically disadvantaged

Definition of basic service: None (see pending)

STATE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND: No

Fund Administrator:
Contributors:
Basis for contribution:
Types of subsidies:
Who draws from fund:
Is subsidy portable:

FEDERAL UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUNDS: Lifeline: Yes Link Up: Yes High Cost: Yes

PENDING ACTIONS: WV has not needed a USF in the past because US was embedded in the rate structure. But they are now considering a US program as part of a local competition docket (94-1102-T-GI). Currently, they have a task force looking at US. The task force has defined basic service to include a telephone number, white page listing, local call switching, access to 911, operator, directory assistance, telecommunication relay service, and access to a long distance carrier. They plan on staying focused on economically disadvantaged, but a high cost subsidy will be added with new legislation. In the new legislation all carriers will contribute to the USF including wireless. They are in the process of determining the subsidy level. The fund will be administered by an independent third party. Any subsidies will go to the carriers, not the customer. There are no pending rate cases and Bell's flat rate is going down to \$15.00 on 1/1/96.

COMMENTS: WV's US program is just now being formulated and will be quantified in the coming year. They are defining what US means under local competition. They expect the need for a USF is less of a problem in WV. They have statewide rates, and the rural nature of the state (i.e., not much business) means there may be less local competition than in other states.

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Programs to access video/cable services: Cable companies are participating in the task force on local service, but none have applied for certification.

Programs to access advanced information services: Some LECs have linked schools to the Internet, and eventually all schools should have access. West Virginia has been awarded a \$2 million grant from IBM for a project aimed at harnessing the Internet for public education instruction. The Library Infomine provides for enhanced communication capabilities at 176 remote libraries around the state, including libraries in 55 public schools.

Programs for electronic access to public/government records:

Public/private partnerships: WV has a Tel-Assistance program that provides a tax credit to carriers for low income subscribers certified as eligible by the Health Department. The World School initiative provides high capacity information access capability to WV public education sites that fall within Bell Atlantic's service area.

1995 NTIA/TIIAP GRANTS

West Virginia Library Commission Cultural Center. This project will enable users in isolated, rural mountain communities to access information services available from electronic sources by merely visiting their local public libraries (Total \$501K, Federal \$225K).

West Virginia Community Action Directors Association. This planning grant will organize and educate community agencies in the use of the information infrastructure (Total \$10K, Federal \$5K).

WISCONSIN

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STATE DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: 5,038,000
Size: 80,371
Proportion rural: 34.3%
Population per sq. mile: 92.8
Median household income: \$33,415
Percent below poverty: 10.8%
Percent on public assistance: 6.9%

OPASTCO STUDY

Subscribers per sq. mile: 13.6
Difference in non-BOC loop costs: 41.4%
Monthly revenues per customer: \$13.49
Revenues if supports eliminated: \$17.45
Percent who would disconnect: 4.30%

TELEPHONE SERVICE DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of lines: 2,738,591
Number of LECs: 86
BOC: Ameritech
Market share of BOC: 66.3%
Penetration Rate: 97.0%
LEC competition permitted: yes

TELEPHONE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

Copper : Yes **Hybrid Fiber:** No
Fiber : Yes **Microwave:** Yes
Percent local loop digital: 96.22%
Other Technology:

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Cable households: 53.0%
Cable in schools: 71.0%

TELEPHONE SERVICE RATES

BOC residential rate (s): \$5.40
LEC residential rates: \$2.90 to \$25.00

UNIVERSAL TELEPHONE SERVICE PROGRAMS

Status of State Universal Service Program: Mandated Universal Service (US) with approved rules, fund not in place
Targeted Groups: Rural/high cost; Low income/economically disadvantaged; Users with disabilities; Schools, health care, and libraries (subsidy for advanced services); Homeless (free voice mail)
Definition of basic service: Single party, touch tone, emergency services, long distance access, fax grade line, modem capability (9600), telecommunication relay services, reasonably adequate calling area, white page listing, annual directory, operator and directory assistance, and toll blocking

STATE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND: Yes

Fund Administrator: Independent 3rd party
Contributors: All providers of telecommunication services with over \$200,000 in revenues
Basis for contribution: % of gross revenues
Types of subsidies: Rate subsidy, Direct infrastructure reimbursement, and Equipment reimbursement
Who draws from fund: Rate subsidy or voucher to customer - High rate assistance credit based on percent (2%) of median income in area; Low income based on individual eligibility; Users with disability get equipment voucher
Is subsidy portable: Yes for low income and users with disability

FEDERAL UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUNDS: Lifeline: Yes Link Up: Yes High Cost: Yes

PENDING ACTIONS: Wisconsin statute (S 196.218) mandated USF to start January 1996. The PSC has submitted rules to the legislation for approval. The new USF covers more programs than the past program. They have not set the % of gross revenues that will be used to determine contributions to USF, and have to hire an administrator. Other than this there are no pending changes. They do have to review the rules every 2 years. They have no cases pending. AMERITECH and GTE are under price regulation so their rates won't change much. They are seeing more and more fiber installed.

COMMENTS: WPSC is very close to implementing Wisconsin's new US program. They have a good program ready to go, but the legislature may not like the rules. They need to hire an administrator. The problem they may have is collecting money for the fund from resellers since some of them are located out of state.

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Programs to access video/cable services: Some cable companies are providing point-to-point communication, and some have recently been approved to provide distance learning. The state is implementing its own statewide compressed videoconferencing and delivery network.

Programs to access advanced information services: The US program will provide advanced services to schools, libraries, homeless and health care organizations. Schools and library will receive 10-30% rate subsidies for advanced services from the USF. Homeless will have access to free voice mail. When Ameritech and GTE went under price regulation, they were required to install fiber to all secondary schools in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Community Information Partnership (WiCIP) is developing a prototype for local community information networks that it hopes to deploy statewide.

Programs for electronic access to public/government records: There is currently a study underway to investigate this issue in the Department of Administration.

Public/private partnerships: Wisconsin Advanced Telecommunication Foundation supports the development of public/private partnerships. An Educational Technology Board is also being implemented to facilitate public/private partnerships. These are grant and/or loan programs.

1995 NTIA/TIIAP GRANTS

State of Wisconsin Department of Administration Bureau of Technology, Policy and Planning. The expansion of "Badger Dial" Internet access will provide cost-effective, universal Internet access for K-12 schools everywhere in Wisconsin providing an affordable base-line connection option to every school in the state (Total \$742K, Federal \$224K).

Milwaukee County Sheriff's Department is developing a method for delivering timely, accurate photographic information to the police officer on the street. The end result will be a telecommunications network capable of delivering high quality, photographic images to more than 3,500 officers (Total \$83K, Federal \$41K).

WYOMING

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STATE DEMOGRAPHICS

Population: 470,000
Size: 97,819
Proportion rural: 35.0%
Population per sq. mile: 4.8
Median household income: \$30,379
Percent below poverty: 10.3%
Percent on public assistance: 5.2%

TELEPHONE SERVICE DEMOGRAPHICS

Number of lines: 249,188
Number of LECs: 14
BOC: US West
Market share of BOC: 83.0%
Penetration Rate: 92.6%
LEC competition permitted: 1995

OPASTCO STUDY

Subscribers per sq. mile: 0.2
Difference in non-BOC loop costs: 35.5%
Monthly revenues per customer: \$16.05
Revenues if supports eliminated: \$35.26
Percent who would disconnect: 27.10%

TELEPHONE SERVICE TECHNOLOGY

Copper : Yes **Hybrid Fiber:** No
Fiber : Yes **Microwave:** Yes
Percent local loop digital: 67.96%
Other Technology: Fixed cellular, BETRS

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATIONS

Cable households: 72.0%
Cable in schools: 63.0%

TELEPHONE SERVICE RATES

BOC residential rate (s): \$12.64 - \$14.64
LEC residential rates: \$5.75 to \$16.80

UNIVERSAL TELEPHONE SERVICE PROGRAMS

Status of State Universal Service Program: Mandated Universal Service (US) with proposed rules, fund not in place
(Final adoption of rules is anticipated in early December, 1995)

Targeted Groups: Rural/high rate

Definition of basic service: Single party, voice grade, 911, long distance, residential or business flat or measured

STATE UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUND: Yes

Fund Administrator: Commission

Contributors: LECs, BOC, IXC's, wireless

Basis for contribution: % of gross retail revenues

Types of subsidies: Rate subsidy to carriers with credit listed on customer bill

Who draws from fund: LECs with rate above 130% of weighted statewide average

Is subsidy portable: No

FEDERAL UNIVERSAL SERVICE FUNDS: Lifeline: Yes Link Up: Yes High Cost: Yes

PENDING ACTIONS: The PSC is nearly finished with the rule making process for US. The Governor will sign the rules within 60 days of final adoption, and they will begin implementing the program. If no one draws from the fund, the commission can suspend it. US West has filed a price regulation plan that includes some substantial rate increases. There is also some discussion about upgrading the infrastructure.

COMMENTS: The WPSC has a heightened awareness of US in light of recent transitions in local competition. Deregulation makes US more important, and the key to US is implementation of a funding mechanism that insures availability and affordability.

ADVANCED TELECOMMUNICATION SERVICES

Programs to access video/cable services: No cable companies have applied for certification.

Programs to access advanced information services:

Programs for electronic access to public/government records: Ferret is a state sponsored bulletin board that allows public access to government records. The Commission is in process of setting up its own bulletin board.

Public/private partnerships:

1995 NTIA/THAP GRANTS

None.